

## Moths of Victoria Part 1- Silk Moths and Allies - Bombycoideae

by Peter Marriott

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The thing I like most about this moth identification book and accompanying CD is how the author, Peter Marriott, has taken what is quite complicated scientific information and made it accessible to anyone, whether naturalist, student, scientist or enthusiast.

Aimed at 'anyone seeking to identify moths around their homes and countryside', this book is user-friendly. Despite the title, it is not restricted to use in Victoria and could also be used in South Australia, New South Wales and Tasmania. It is a handy size for using in the field and very visual with over 300 photographs providing most of the detail in the book and CD. Over the next decade approximately 10 more books will be released in this series, covering most Victorian macro and micro moths.

The introduction gives the reader a general understanding of the diversity of moths in Victoria and relevant information pertaining to naming and data collection for this book. The book is then set out in six chapters, each covering a family of the super family Bombycoidea. This book and accompanying CD cover about 150 species across the six families.

Photographs are the major feature of each chapter and deserve a special mention. They add to the practicality of the book and make comparisons between individuals easy. There are two types of photographs: those of preserved specimens from museum or private collections and those of live specimens, *in situ*. The former depict information such as size, details of forewing and hindwing, variation between individuals, and sexual dimorphism. The photographs of live specimens show eggs, larvae, pupae and adults, and give an idea of how particular moths and their life stages may appear in nature.

Identifications of moths to family level are made simple with the photographs and descrip-



tions in each chapter. The accompanying CD provides further detail and may help with identifications to lower taxonomic levels. Marriott has used his knowledge to try to overcome common misidentifications.

The layout of the book is very deliberate: species that are easily mixed up are put close together along with descriptions of their differences. However, problems may arise with identifications if important diagnostic features are present on areas that have not been presented in the book such as the underside of wings and genitalia.

The CD is a series of PDF files containing photographs and information on Bombycoidea species which should be used in conjunction with the book, not separately. This information includes more descriptions, Victorian distributions, flight periods, and behavioural information of particular species.

Peter Marriott is a renowned expert on moths, with a deep understanding of their taxonomy and relationship with the natural world. This publication shows Peter's desire to share his passion with anyone who is interested. It is wonderful to know that this book will inspire many people with a curiosity for moths to go and have a look around outside to see what they can find.

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